

also established a Web site that allows users to submit their recommendations for future Golden Fleece Awards at hill.house.gov/goldenfleece.

Americans are crying out for accountability from our leaders, and I look forward to working with them and my colleagues to spot waste and find ways to effectively eliminate that kind of spending and regulatory overreach in Washington.

**DO UNTO OTHERS AS WE WOULD
HAVE THEM DO UNTO US**

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the great Mahalia Jackson was a gospel singer. The great singer and civil rights activist Mahalia Jackson, once proclaimed by Harry Belafonte to be the most powerful woman in America, the great Mahalia Jackson gave us some words to live by, some words that can add meaning to life. She, in one of her songs, indicated that, and I shall paraphrase, if I can help somebody as I travel along, then my living shall not be in vain. Live not in vain; help somebody—that is the essence of the message that she presented.

I am here today to speak of persons who are in harm's way and who are suffering. The people of Nepal have had two earthquakes visited upon them: one a 7.8 magnitude, the other a 7.3 magnitude. These two earthquakes have done great damage. More than 8,000 people are dead. I am looking at the statistical information: more than 16,000 injured, 8 million persons affected, nearly 500,000 homes destroyed, another 200,000-plus damaged. They are still in harm's way, but there is something we can do. We can do unto others as we would have them do to us if we had suffered a similar tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great opportunity for us to do something to help without actually expending a lot of American dollars, although we have spent quite a bit. I am proud to say that the United States has accorded approximately \$40 million to this effort—\$40 million. It will take a lot more, but the United States is involved in doing its part. We have had our rescue teams there; and one of our rescue teams, unfortunately, suffered some tragedy. One of our military helicopters went down. We have lost lives there. People have been there living not in vain, trying to do what they can to be of assistance, doing unto others as we would have them do for us under similar circumstances.

One of the things that we can do is sign on to a bill that will allow those persons who are in this country from Nepal, who are here lawfully, to stay in this country for an extended period of time while their country is recovering. H.R. 2033 affords Nepalese who are in the United States of America to stay for a while longer. They will not have their status in the country change.

They won't become persons on a pathway to citizenship. They will simply have more time here. We will not send them back in harm's way. We will do unto them what we would have them do unto us if we were in a similar circumstance.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has many persons who are supporting it. More than 50 persons have supported this piece of legislation. I am proud to say that some of the persons who have supported it are persons who have great Nepalese communities, and there are others who do not. They just want to be of help.

I want to mention a few whose names I did not mention when I mentioned names previously, or I did not state them correctly. This is a chance for me to correct the RECORD: Congressman MIKE CAPUANO, Congressman TONY CÁRDENAS, Congressman JOE CROWLEY, Congressman MARK DESAULNIER, Congressman RAÚL GRIJALVA, Congressman LUIS GUTIÉRREZ, Congressman JARED POLIS, Congressman CHARLES RANGEL, Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND, Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ, and Congresswoman LINDA SÁNCHEZ—all persons who are supportive, along with many others, nearly 50.

I am proud to say that the community in Houston, the Nepalese community has come together, and they have a goal of raising \$100,000. They have exceeded that goal, under the leadership of Mr. Ghimirey and Mr. Nepal. They have exceeded the goal of \$100,000, and they are still raising additional funds.

I believe that H.R. 2033 affords all of us to live not in vain. I think this is a great opportunity to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. I ask that we support H.R. 2033 and live not in vain. Help somebody as we travel along our way.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Minister Michael Greene, Lehman Avenue Church of Christ, Bowling Green, Kentucky, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, Our Creator and the One from whom we receive our unalienable rights, we give You our thanks for this day and for all the bountiful blessings You have poured out upon this great

land, this country, and these peoples. We pray these blessings will continue through Your grace.

We are thankful for the opportunity to serve wherein is found greatness. We pray for those assembled here today as they deliberate in this august body. We pray Your guiding hand be upon them.

Bless them with wisdom. Bless them with courage to do the right as You have revealed the right.

Help them to remember that what is being done in this place is not just an exercise in debate but will affect millions of people.

Help us, Father, to preserve our heritage of freedom for future generations.

This we pray on this 20th day of May in the year of our Lord.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. KUSTER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**WELCOMING MINISTER MICHAEL
GREENE**

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Mr. Michael Greene to Washington. Mike is serving today as guest chaplain in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Speaking just moments ago, Mike prayed for all of us serving this great institution and the work we do each and every day. I have been fortunate to know Mike as my minister in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and have always appreciated his prayers.

Throughout his 44 years as a minister, Mike has served Churches of Christ in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia. He also serves on the board of directors of Foundation Christian Academy in Bowling Green.

I always enjoy having a little bit of Kentucky here in Washington. Today, I am proud to welcome you, Mike, to the U.S. Capitol. Thank you for your prayers and for taking the time to be with us in our Nation's Capitol today.

**ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE**

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The Chair will

entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHNER. My colleagues, next week marks the 1-year anniversary since General Eric Shinseki resigned as the Secretary of the Veterans Affairs Department.

At the time, the President promised reform. He said: "The number one priority is making sure that problems get fixed."

Instead of a new day at the VA, the American people are still seeing more of the same. Last year, Congress gave the VA Secretary new authority to fire employees. While some 110 VA facilities kept secret lists to hide their wait times, just one person has been fired—one.

What the hell happened to the rest of them? Some got to retire with their benefits, some got transfers, some got paid leave, some got a slap on the wrist. All of them went on collecting checks from taxpayers. If only the Veterans Administration did half as good a job of taking care of our veterans as they do the bureaucrats, we would be in a lot better shape.

Congress also gave the VA more than \$16 billion to improve care and to shorten waiting times, yet the number of patients facing long waits is about the same. The number of patients waiting more than 90 days has doubled. At this point, the VA can't even build a hospital. Just about every project ends up years behind schedule and hundreds of millions, if not billions, over cost.

Last week, the public learned that the VA is spending \$6 billion a year illegally. An internal report exposed examples of overspending on conferences, improper gifts, inappropriate purchases, and promotional items—again, if only VA bureaucrats did as good a job taking care of our veterans as they do themselves.

The author of the report at the VA wrote, "doors are swung wide open for fraud, waste, and abuse," and that these actions "may potentially result in serious harm or death to America's veterans."

That is their own expert saying this.

This isn't run-of-the-mill incompetence. It is arrogance; and it is arrogance that allows our veterans to be lied to, ignored, and, frankly, left to die.

My colleagues, it is almost Memorial Day. This is when we slow down and reflect on the debt of gratitude that we owe to our heroes.

I commend Chairman MILLER and all of the members of the Veterans Affairs Committee for striving every day to fulfill this obligation. Congress will continue to pass legislation to hold the VA accountable, but only the adminis-

tration can change the culture from within.

The President owes the American people a real, long-term plan to fix the VA—not a promise, not a pledge, not rearranging the chairs on a deck—a real plan to clean up this mess.

I will keep coming back to this podium until the administration produces such a plan.

VOLVO OCEAN RACE

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the city of Newport, Rhode Island, in my district, on hosting, this month, the Volvo Ocean Race, the world's premier sailing race around the world.

This 12-day event brought 125,000 visitors to Rhode Island, far exceeding even the most optimistic projections, as well as millions of dollars in economic activity that supported Rhode Island's tourism industry and our small-business community. Most importantly, the success of this event offered an opportunity to tell our story about the great things that are happening in Rhode Island today.

I want to thank everyone who helped make the only North American stop-over for this year's Volvo Ocean Race such an incredible success, including Sail Newport, Rhode Island's Public Sailing Center, Discover Newport, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Newport Chamber of Commerce, Senate President Teresa Paiva-Weed, Speaker Mattiello, members of the general assembly, and Governor Gina Raimondo.

I want to especially acknowledge Senator WHITEHOUSE for all of his work to bring this race to Rhode Island and his ongoing efforts to enhance our State's position in the maritime industry.

Congratulations to everyone who made this such a success.

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT ROBERT H. DIETZ

(Mr. GIBSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Staff Sergeant Robert H. Dietz who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his courageous actions during World War II. Sergeant Dietz hailed from Kingston, New York, a proud and historical city in New York's 19th Congressional District.

In March 1945, Sergeant Dietz led his squad on an attack of a heavily fortified German position. Under heavy machine gun fire, Sergeant Dietz advanced forward, clearing enemy obstacles, providing a path for the men of his squad and platoon. This selfless act enabled the success of this attack; but in the process, Sergeant Dietz lost his life.

With strong local support, we submitted a bill to rename the post office in Kingston for Sergeant Dietz. Yesterday that bill passed in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. I thank Chairman CHAFFETZ, his committee, and the entire New York delegation for their strong support; and I look forward to its passage in the full House soon.

Mr. Speaker, as we approach Memorial Day weekend, we pause to remember Sergeant Dietz and all those men and women who lost their lives in defense of our freedoms.

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I, along with many of my colleagues—both women and men, Republicans and Democrats—wear red to pressure Nigerian President-elect Muhammadu Buhari into taking aggressive action against Boko Haram.

Next week, as Nigeria welcomes the new President and celebrates Democracy Day, we here in Congress want to put a spotlight on the immense threat Boko Haram poses to Nigeria's democracy and freedom.

Mr. Speaker, we want President-elect Buhari to know we will hold him accountable, just as we held his predecessor accountable. We urge this new administration to bring with it a swift and lasting change in attitude on this issue. We hope the new President will have a sense of urgency in finding the Chibok schoolgirls and defeating Boko Haram.

Mr. Speaker, we expect the new President to find the girls, whether they have been married off against their will or not, are alive or in a mass grave. Wherever they are, we want to know.

Until they are found, we will continue to tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls; tweet, tweet, tweet #joinrepwilson.

21ST CENTURY CURES ACT

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the 21st Century Cures Act. This is legislation that we, at the Energy and Commerce Committee, are working on in a bipartisan basis, and we look forward to moving it to the House floor and seeing this passed and signed into law. Why are we doing it? Because we want to put the focus on cures, real cures that will enable people to live better lives.

Let's take just one disease, Alzheimer's. There are 5 million Americans that currently have Alzheimer's. The cost to the Nation is \$215 billion a year. When you look out several decades to 2050, the cost is estimated to be